

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-10 OMB-01 EUR-12 CU-02 SAM-01 SAJ-01 SR-02 ORM-01

/090 W

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R 190904Z APR 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1900

INFO AMEMBASSY ABUDHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

BMEMBASSY BEIRUT 1188

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY SANAA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 429

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, P WT, I Z, TS, IR, SA

SUBJECT: BAATH POLICY TOWARD OTHER ARAB STATES

1. ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AGREEMENTS REACHED DURING
TUNISIAN FORMIN CHATTI'S APRIL 2-5 VISIT CONCERNS THE
150 TUNISIAN STUDENTS IN IRAQ. ACCORDING TO TUNISIAN
AMB SHILLI, SOME OF THESE "STUDENTS" HAVE BEEN HERE AS
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LONG AS 10 YEARS. THEY HAVE BEEN A CONSTANT IRRITANT

IN BILATERAL RELATIONS, HIGHLY POLITIZED, AND SOURCE OF PROPAGANDA AGAINST BOURGIBA REGIME. MOST HAD BEEN RECRUITED BY BAATH IN EUROPE OR ARAB COUNTRIES AND OFFERED GENEROUS SCHOLARSHIPS.

2. ACTIVITY OF THESE STUDENTS DISCUSSED DURING RCC VICE CHAIRMAN SADDAM HUSSEIN'S MARCH 7 VISIT TO TUNISIA AND PREVIOUSLY. IRAQ HAS NOW AGREED THAT (A) TUNISIAN STUDENTS IN IRAQ WILL NO LONGER BE PERMITTED TO ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY; AND (B) HENCEFORTH TUNISIAN STUDENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED ONLY THROUGH TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT CHANNELS.

3. SHILLI ALSO TOLD ME THAT IN RESPONSE TO KING KHALID'S APPEAL FOR SAUDI EXILES TO RETURN TO SAUDI ARABIA, GOI WAS ENCOURAGING SAUDI EXILES TO RETURN.

4. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN PRESS REPORT (CAIRO MENA APRIL 6-FBIS/MEA-75-67) THAT GOI HAS ASKED IRANIAN POLITICAL REFUGEES IN BAGHDAD TO DEPART FOLLOWING MARCH 6 ACCORD.

5. COMMENT: THESE EVENTS ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY RELATED AND IF SO, OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE. IF REGIME IS SERIOUS ABOUT APPLYING SOME RESTRICTIONS ON ARAB "STUDENTS" AND POLITICAL EXILES FROM OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES, IT WILL MARK A MAJOR DEPARTURE IN NATURE OF BAATH REGIME'S FOREIGN POLICY, I.E. DECISION TO FOREGO SPREAD OF BAATH IDEOLOGY (IRAQI VERSION) AND ACHIEVE ARAB UNITY UNDER AEGIS OF BAATH PARTY IN ORDER TO HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL ARAB STATES. NONE OF THESE MEASURES HAVE RECEIVED ANY PUBLICITY HERE. THEY ARE SURELY KNOWN, HOWEVER, TO PARTY MEMBERS. NATIONAL (PAN-ARAB) LEADERSHIP WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY OPOSE SUCH TENDENCIES FOR IF BAATHISM IS NO LONGER TO BE SPREAD, THE PAN-ARAB LEADERSHIP HAS LOST ITS RAISON D'ETRE.
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